



# "Watchman, what of the night?"

*The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come. Isaiah 21:11-12*

## A "NEW ORGANIZATION"

Summarizing the reaction to the message of Righteousness by Faith in the four years following 1888, Elder A. T. Jones at the 1893 General Conference said:

All the way between open and free deliberate surrender and acceptance of it, to open, deliberate, and positive rejection of it - all the way between - the compromisers have been scattered ever since; and those who have taken that compromising position are no better prepared tonight to discern what is the message of the righteousness of Christ than they were four years ago.

This compromising attitude produced some serious blind spots. Jones continued:

Some of these brethren, since the Minneapolis meeting, I have heard, myself, say "amen" to preaching, to statements that were utterly heathen, and did not know but that it was the righteousness of Christ. Some of those who stood so openly against that at that time, and voted with uplifted hand against it, and since that time I have heard say "amen" to statements that were as openly and decidedly papal as the papal church itself can state them.<sup>1</sup> [O how these "brethren" must have loved A. T. Jones.]

A failure to understand, and accept without compromise the righteousness of Christ by faith, led to a verbal acknowledgement of papal and heathen concepts which were mistaken for the genuine. This is the tragic consequence of not walking in the light which heaven bestows. The sparks of our own kindling look good to us. We are much more at ease with that which is of human origin than we are with that which comes down from God out of heaven.

But the righteousness of Christ by faith is more than merely an assent to a doctrine of how men are to be saved; it is a way of life by which men are to live. The righteousness of Christ determines human relationships, religious fellowship, and church administration. Among the apostles there arose contention as to who was going to be the "head" when the kingdom of God would be set up. Jesus call them

to Him, and set forth the very basic elements of church administration. He said:

The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But this shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.<sup>2</sup>

Matthew in reporting the same counsel quotes Jesus declaring emphatically, "It shall not be so among you."<sup>3</sup> In the true church, there is one Master, or head, even Jesus Christ Himself, and of the rest - laity and clergy alike - Jesus plainly stated - "All ye are brethren."<sup>4</sup> Because this would have been the fruitage in the acceptance of the message of Christ's righteousness, it was ignored by some. Of this the servant of the Lord stated in 1895 - "The righteousness of Christ by faith has been ignored by some; for it is contrary to their spirit and their whole experience. Rule, rule, has been their course of action. Satan has had opportunity of representing himself."<sup>5</sup>

In this year - 1895 - on March 8, and in September - two very important messages came from Sister White's pen. One was entitled - "All Ye Are Brethren", and the other - "Thou Shalt Have No Other Gods Before Me." Note the counsel:

The Lord has not placed any one of His human agencies under the dictation and control of those who are themselves but erring mortals. He has not placed upon men the power to say, You shall do this, and you shall do that. But there is a power exercised in Battle Creek [now Washington] that God has not given, and He will judge those who assume this authority. They have somewhat the same spirit that led Uzzah to lay his hand on the ark to steady it, as though God was not able to care for His sacred symbols. Far less of man's power and authority should be exercised toward God's human agencies. Brethren, leave God to rule.<sup>6</sup>

No man is a proper judge of another man's duty. Man is responsible to God; and as finite, erring men take into their hands the jurisdiction of their fellowmen, as if the Lord commissioned them to lift up, and cast down, all heaven is filled with indignation. There are strange principles being established in regard to the control of the minds and works of men, by human judges, as though these finite men were gods.<sup>7</sup>

These wrong principles of administration - so contrary to the righteousness of Christ - were centered in 1895 in Battle Creek, and were corrupting the whole General Con-

ference.<sup>8</sup> The spirit of domination was extending downward "to the presidents of [local] conferences."<sup>9</sup> What was the end result? Note carefully:

When men who profess to serve God ignore His paternal character and depart from honor and righteousness in dealing with their fellowmen, Satan exults, for he has inspired them with his attributes. *They are following in the track of Romanism.*<sup>9</sup>

This is the end result whether we reject the doctrine of righteousness of Christ by faith, or whether we ignore its application to church fellowship and administration. In 1893, Jones could say without fear of refutation that men who voted negatively in regard to the message in 1888 could say "amen" to statements of doctrine that were as papal as Papal Rome could state them. The servant of the Lord in 1895 could say upon the authority of Inspiration that when men in ecclesiastical office choose to ignore the principles of the righteousness of Christ, and seek to rule their fellowmen, that this also was placing the church in "the track of Romanism."

Some very vital principles are at stake here. In the Papal concept, the Cathedral - the seat of the Bishop - is the center of authority, and is thus to be considered the Church. There can be no church in the papal concept without the reigning bishop, or human authority. On the other hand, the Judeo-Christian-Protestant concept is the priesthood of all believers. Israel was to have been "a kingdom of priests."<sup>10</sup> The Church which Christ established was to have been "a royal priesthood" under the great High Priest in the sanctuary above.<sup>11</sup> When the Jewish nation failed to realize this objective, they cast men out of their synagogues, and finally committed the crime of the ages - the murder of the Son of God. When the apostolic church departed from the simple dictum that Christ through the Holy Spirit was to administer His church, the Papacy was the end result. In 1888 when Christ came near to His appointed church of that hour in the Presence of the Holy Spirit, He was rejected as the head of the church by men who wished to rule, rule, rule. This rejection of the authority of the Holy Spirit as the true vicegerent of the

Son of God, placed the church in the track of Romanism.

Now for decade after decade this spirit of domination has so taken hold of the church, and its leadership that it has become a way of life and policy. Today, it has crystallized, and has been attested to in legal documents. In a brief filed in the Superior Court of the State of California for the County of Los Angeles on behalf of the Southern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, dated May 16, 1975, it stated clearly and plainly - "Plaintiffs-petitioners are the local governing body of the world wide Seventh-day Adventist Church, which is *an extremely highly organized hierarchical church* built upon ascending series of representative bodies." (p. 2, lines 7-9) This position was more boldly asserted in briefs filed in the case of *Merikay Silver vs PPPA*. "The church was described as having 'orders of clergy', with different levels of authority, and a first minister at the top. In his affidavit, Elder Pierson referred to himself as the 'first minister' of the Seventh-day Adventist Church."<sup>12</sup> A footnote in a brief dated March 3, 1975 read:

Although it is true that there was a period in the life of the Seventh-day Adventist Church when the denomination took a distinctly anti-Roman Catholic viewpoint, and the term "hierarchy" was used in a pejorative sense to refer to the papal form of church governance, that attitude on the Church's part was nothing more than a manifestation of widespread anti-popery among conservative protestant denominations in the early part of this century and the latter part of the last, and which has now been consigned to the historical trash heap so far as the Seventh-day Adventist Church is concerned.<sup>13</sup>

Consider for a moment the time element as noted in this brief - "the early part of this century and the latter part of the last." Place this on our own church history - 1888 - 1903. What was taking place in the church at that time? Listen to what the servant of the Lord said at the 1901 Session:

I feel a special interest in the movements and decisions that shall be made at this Conference regarding things that should have been done years ago, especially ten years ago, when we were assembled in Conference, and the Spirit and power of God came into our meeting, testifying that God was ready to work for His people if they would come into working order. . .

The principles of heaven are to be carried out in every family, in the

discipline of every church, in every establishment, in every institution, in every school, and in everything that shall be managed. You have no right to manage, unless you manage after God's order. . .

That these men should stand in a sacred place, to be the voice of God to the people as we once believed the General Conference to be, - that is past. What we want now in a reorganization. We want to begin at the foundation, and to build upon a different principle.<sup>14</sup>

But what happened, the reorganization of 1901 was overturned in 1903, and the Church was again on the track of Romanism. On this track we have been traveling over the years until now in legal briefs we can say that we are a hierarchy, with orders of clergy, and a "first minister." The development of the papacy was in three simple steps:- 1) The monarchical bishop developed in the early church; 2) the Bishop of Rome assumed authority as the first among equals; and 3) the same bishop asserted his right as the "first" bishop of the Church, or Pope. We have now arrived at the Papal form of church government with the President of the General Conference asserting in a sworn affidavit that he is "first minister" of the Church. Our Saviour said - "It shall not be so among you."

What is the picture that has emerged? We have now entered full scale into a "new" organization, discarding the counsel and admonition of the servant of the Lord. And what does this mean? Here is the divine verdict:

We cannot now step off the foundation that God has established. We cannot now enter into a new organization; for this would mean apostasy from the truth.<sup>15</sup>

Our apostasy is now complete; having switched over to the track of Romanism, we have crossed the Rubicon on the way to Vatican station itself. Without their consent, the laity of the Church have been transferred into a new organization, and thus unwittingly have been engulfed in the apostasy. But each member of the new organization has within his power to re-establish himself in the truth, and refuse to give his support, either financially, or otherwise to the "new" organization. On the basis of this decision, he is casting his vote as to his acceptance or

rejection of where the hierarchy has taken him. May God have mercy on us individually as we struggle for the freedom that truth alone can give. Ye shall know the truth and truth shall make you free.

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- <sup>1</sup>A. T. Jones, General Conference Daily Bulletin, 1893, p. 244  
<sup>2</sup>Luke 22:24-27                      <sup>3</sup>Matt. 20:26                      <sup>4</sup>Matt. 23:8  
<sup>5</sup>Ellen G. White, Testimonies to Ministers, p. 363  
<sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 347-348                      <sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 348                      <sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 359  
<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 362                      <sup>10</sup>Exodus 19:6                      <sup>11</sup>I Peter 2:9-10  
<sup>12</sup>Spectrum, Vol. 7, No. 2, p. 49                      <sup>13</sup>Ibid., pp. 49-50  
<sup>14</sup>Ellen G. White, General Conference Bulletin, 1901, pp. 23, 25  
<sup>15</sup>Ellen G. White, Selected Messages, bk. ii, p. 390

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#### NOTES AND COMMENTS

Individuality in Religion by A. T. Jones. Since reporting this publication as now available through the Foundation, I have had opportunity to read it carefully. It begins rather slowly, and is somewhat involved, but by the time you reach the heart of the book, Guatamanian shock waves of truth starting hitting you. Your adobe concepts of authority are flattened. This little book is worth its weight in gold. The price is \$3.50.

ORDERS FOR PUBLICATIONS - As of April 1, please mail all orders for publications to Adventist Laymen's Foundation, P. O. Box 176, Lamar, Ark., 72846. Make all checks payable as previously. All other correspondence - thought papers, tapes, and business - continue to use the regular address - P. O. Box 237, Florence, Miss. 39073. Between now and July 1, there may be some delay in answering letters, and in filling orders, so please be patient with us. Our present work load will be doubling for these next few months.

New Policy - Previously, when we received an address correction through the postal service, we have sent the returned issue of the thought paper, and requested verification as to whether you wished to remain on the mailing list. This we shall discontinue doing. We will hold the correction given us by the postal service for 30 days, and if we do not hear from the one who has moved in that period of time, the name will be completely removed from our files.

ON FINANCES - We have not commented on the article in the Review (December 25, 1975, pp. 9-11) by Elder Pierson confirming the church's gambling in the stock market. We have waited and will continue to wait until we can obtain unquestionable verification as to what the church officials did during the hectic days of the stock market during January and February, and now March. Did they close out all of the church's involvement or not? What was the final loss, or was there a gain with the

DJ pressing hard at 1000? We do not know, but will report as soon as authoritative information is available. We do believe the best comment we have read todate on the article appeared in *Letters* (Review, Feb. 26, 1976, p. 3) where Frank Lang of Chattanooga, Tenn., wrote - "I was disappointed in the vagueness of Elder Pierson's discussion of stocks, bonds, and denominational policy." The rest of the letter was also excellent. BUT the question is - what kind of "lively stones" are being built in the church membership today as contrasted to the 1930's?

The Taped Ministry - the following tapes are now available. \$2.00 per cassette tape. (We still have a few Craig 2623 Cassettes available for \$42.50)

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- A-02 - Three Crosses  
The Revelation of the Cross
- A-03 - Δοξα and Δοξαζω in the Gospel of John  
Jesus Christ as Revealed in the Gospel of John  
(Do not let the Greek "throw you" - Δοξα means "glory" and Δοξαζω is the verb form.)
- A-04 - The Challenge of the Book of Revelation - 1  
The Challenge of the Book of Revelation - 2
- A-05 - On the Palms of Jesus' Hands  
The Reality of Jesus
- A-06 - How to Find Peace\*  
Self Renunciation\*  
\* Studies based on John 3:1-15
- A-07 - Chosen Vessels\*  
Where? Why? Where? (A Message for youth)

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